a.) Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-3 (Cancelled).

4. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ An isolated DNA coding for ~~the~~ a polypeptide ~~of any one of claims 1 to 3, or the DNA of SEQ ID NO: 2~~ comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ An isolated DNA comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ An isolated DNA which ~~hybridizes~~ is hybridizable with ~~the~~ DNA ~~of claim 4 under stringent conditions, and codes for a polypeptide having transaldolase activity~~ consisting of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 at 65°C fixed on a filter in the presence of from 0.7 to 1.0 mol/liter NaCl, followed by washing at 65°C with 0.1 to 2-fold concentration SSC solution.

7. (Currently Amended) A recombinant DNA obtained by ligating the DNA of ~~claim 4~~ any one of claims 4-6, 17 or 18 with a vector.

8. (Original) A transformant carrying the recombinant DNA of claim 7.

Claim 9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) The transformant according to claim 8, wherein the transformant has an ability to produce an aromatic amino acid or aromatic vitamin.

11. (Currently Amended) A process for producing an aromatic amino acid or aromatic vitamin, which ~~comprises~~ comprises:

culturing the transformant of claim 10 in a medium to thereby produce and accumulate in ~~the~~ culture the aromatic amino acid or aromatic vitamin, and

recovering the aromatic amino acid or aromatic vitamin from the culture.

12. (Previously Presented) A transformant in which one or more nucleotides have been substituted, deleted or inserted in the nucleotide sequence of the DNA carried by the transformant of claim 8 or in the nucleotide sequence of a DNA existing upstream the DNA and participating in transcription and translation, and of which the transaldolase activity is lowered below that of the transformant not having undergone the substitution, deletion or insertion, or of which the transaldolase activity is lost.

13. (Currently Amended) The transformant according to claim 8, wherein the transformant has an ability to produce a substance selected from the group consisting of L-histidine, riboflavin, nucleic acids and nucleic acid-associated substances.

14. (Currently Amended) A process for producing a substance selected from the group consisting of L-histidine, riboflavin, nucleic acids and nucleic acid-associated substances, which ~~comprises~~ comprises:

culturing the transformant of claim 13 in a medium to thereby produce and accumulate the substance in ~~the~~ culture, and

recovering the substance from the culture.

15. (Currently Amended) A process for producing a polypeptide described

in any one of following (1) to (3):

(1) a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1;

(2) a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 in which one to a few amino acid have been substituted, deleted or added, and having transaldolase activity;

(3) a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence which is at least 95% homologous to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, and having transaldolase activity, which ~~comprises~~ comprises the steps of:

culturing the transformant of claim 8 in a medium to thereby produce and accumulate the polypeptide in ~~the~~ culture, and

recovering the polypeptide from the culture.

Claim 16 (Cancelled)

17. (New) An isolated DNA coding for a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 in which from one up to a few amino acids have been substituted, deleted or added, and having transaldolase activity.

18. (New) An isolated polypeptide coding for the polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence which is at least 95% homologous to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, and having transaldolase activity.